areas and in the urban areas the percentage was 3.53 for the males and 1.02 for the women. So, I would like to inform the Member that the National Sample Survey Organisation is an organisation of international repute and standard and their estimates may be accepted as reliable. The survey is held every 5 year and there is no other better instrument giving figure of employment and unemployment. A fresh survey has also been started from 1st July, 1987, which will be completed in the month of June, 1988. I would also like to inform the hon. Member that all the job seekers on the live registers of the employment exchanges are not necessarily unemployed. This is something I would like to bring home... (*Interruptions*) Let me finish.

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: I challenge his figure. He is misleading the House. How can he say like that? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: I had agreed with the hon. Member... (*Interruptions*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Please sit down. You have got other weapons to elicit information. Please sit down. (*Interruptions*). Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Buffer Stock Position of Wheat and Rice

*245 SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the buffer stock position of wheat and rice at the end of 1987;

(b) whether the buffer stocks are at the base level;

(c) the quantum of wheat and rice proposed to be procured during the Rabi season; and

(d) whether Government propose to maximise the procurement during the Rabi season to maintain the base level of buffer stock?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) The total stock of foodgrains with the public agencies as on 1st January, 1988 was estimated at 14.14 million tonnes, of which wheat was 7.57 million tonnes and rice 6.48 million tonnes. This was against the total requirement of 20.1 million tonnes on that date under the buffer stocking policy.

(c) No procurement targets are fixed as wheat and paddy are procured to extend price support to farmers while rice is procured under levy.

(d) Yes, Sir; the procuring agencies have been advised to maximise procurement.

Three Pronged Strategy for Agriculture

*246. SHRI DINKARAO GOVINDRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Dr. M. S. Swaminathan had recently suggested in his lecture at the University of Madras on the 3rd January, 1988, a three-pronged strategy to lift Indian agriculture out of rut *viz.*, (i) application of knowledge of cost-effective technologies; (ii) actual farmer-scientist cooperation and (iii) massive application of modern technological knowledge; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

The Government is appreciative of the suggestions made for using cost-effective technology, developing farmer-scientist cooperation, and making massive application of modern technology among the farming communities for accelerating agricultural production. All out efforts are being made by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research in these directions.

*247. [*Transferred to the 17th March*, 1988].

Providing Treatment Facilities in Private Hospitals to ESI Covered Employees in Kerala

*248. SHRI T. K. C. VADUTHALA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the delay in the reimbursement of the cost of medicines purchased from outside by the employees covered by the E.S.I. Scheme in Kerala;

(b) whether it is a fact that under the existing arrangements, the employees who meet with accidents are treated in Government hospitals only;

(c) if so, whether, in view of the delay caused by the non-availability of proper medical facilities in Government hospitals, Government propose to permit such employees to take treatment in the nearest private hospital in emergent cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) The State Government of Kerala, who are responsible for administration of medical care under the ESI Scheme in the State, have reported that there has been a delay in reimbursing to the employees, covered under the E.S.I. Scheme, the cost of medicines purchased from outside.

(b) and (c) The insured persons are normally required to take medical treatment in E.S.I. Hospital or Government Hospital. However, in extreme emergency cases, they are allowed to take treatment in private institutions and there is no delay in extending medical facilities in emergent cases.

Measures to improve the Fishing Industry in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

*249. DR. G. VIJAY MOHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state what measures Government propose to take to improve the fishing industry in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL): The Government have approved a number of schemes during Seventh Five Year Plan for development of fisheries in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Important among them are supply of mechanised boats and fishing gear at subsidised prices, establishment of ice and cold storage plants, fish processing and storage facilities, landing and berthing facilities, training of fishermen etc. The approved outlay for fisheries during Seventh Plan is Rs. 405 lakhs.

*250. [*Transferred to the 16th March*, 1988].

Offer of Steel Know-how by the USSR

*251. SHRI HASHIM RAZA ALLAHABADI ABDI: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the USSR has recently offered the latest steel know-how to India; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR): (a) and (b) The cooperation between USSR and India for transfer of know-how in the steel sector is an on going process. However, an Inter-Governmental agreement has also been entered into between USSR and India in November,